

BIRDS OF EASTERN MCKENZIE COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

BY ADRIAN LARSON

[Concluded from the WILSON BULLETIN, March, 1928, page 48]

CHIMNEY SWIFT. *Chaetura pelagica*. Rare. One was seen on September 8, 1916, and during the summer of 1923 a pair was seen in Charlson.

KINGBIRD. *Tyrannus tyrannus*. A very common summer resident, breeding. Every clump of trees seems to harbor a pair of Kingbirds during the summer. Average spring arrival, May 20 (nine years). Earliest spring arrival, May 12, 1915. Average fall departure, August 23 (ten years). Latest fall departure, September 13, 1917.

ARKANSAS KINGBIRD. *Tyrannus verticalis*. A common summer resident, breeding; less numerous, however, than *tyrannus*. Average spring arrival, May 18 (three years). Earliest spring arrival, May 10, 1919. Average fall departure, August 26 (two years). Latest fall departure, August 28, 1925.

SAY'S PHOEBE. *Sayornis sayus*. A common summer resident, breeding. This bird is common in the badlands, nesting in the crevices and on the stone ledges of the cliffs. It also frequents and nests about the old ranch houses. Through the summer it keeps up its persistent call of "*phoebe, phoebe*," with occasional variation, but with tiresome monotony to one who is compelled to hear. Average spring arrival, April 24 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, April 14, 1921. Average fall departure, September 18 (three years). Latest fall departure, September 24, 1920.

TRAILL'S FLYCATCHER. *Empidonax trailli*. An abundant summer resident, nesting usually in growths of willows. Average spring arrival, May 24 (three years). Earliest spring arrival, May 21, 1921.

LEAST FLYCATCHER. *Empidonax minimus*. Common, but whether it breeds or not is uncertain. Average spring arrival, May 21 (two years).

SASKATCHEWAN HORNED LARK. *Otocoris alpestris enthymia*. I believe this bird can be considered the most common bird in the region. It nests early and late in the season.

HOYT'S HORNED LARK. *Otocoris alpestris hoyti*. This subspecies is occasionally found in the winter. February 24, 1926.

MAGPIE. *Pica pica hudsonia*. An abundant resident, breeding; not found far from timber or water, as a rule.

BLUEJAY. *Cyanocitta cristata*. I have never seen this bird here myself, but it has been reported by others, and I include it in the list

on that basis. There are plenty of oak trees near Charlson and near the buttes about twenty miles south of Charlson, and Bluejays should be found there. About forty or fifty miles south, in the Killdeer Mountains, Bluejays are common.

RAVEN. *Corvus corax principalis*. Rare. Recorded March 25, 1920, and November 9, 1920.

WESTERN CROW. *Corvus brachyrhynchos hesperis*. A common transient and summer resident. It is occasionally seen in mild winters. Average spring arrival, March 22 (twelve years). Earliest spring arrival, March 7, 1926. Average fall departure, October 18 (six years). Latest fall departure, December 6, 1923.

CLARKE'S NUTCRACKER. *Nucifraga columbiana*. Accidental. One was seen on August 16, 1919.

BOBOLINK. *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*. A common summer resident of the prairies, breeding; it is partial to the meadows. Average spring arrival, May 23 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, May 13, 1913. Average fall departure, September 5 (four years). Latest fall departure, September 18, 1912.

COWBIRD. *Molothrus ater ater*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 7 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, May 3, 1918.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD. *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 5 (seven years). Earliest spring arrival, April 30, 1921. Average fall departure, September 6 (three years). Latest fall departure, September 16, 1924.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD. *Agelaius phoeniceus* subsp.? A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, April 14 (ten years). Earliest spring arrival, March 31, 1925. Latest fall departure, October 19, 1924.

WESTERN MEADOWLARK. *Sturnella neglecta*. An abundant summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, March 29 (eleven years). Earliest spring arrival, March 18, 1921. Average fall departure, October 23 (ten years). Latest fall departure, November 2, 1917.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE. *Icterus galbula*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. It is more numerous in the cottonwood groves along the Missouri River. Average spring arrival, May 24 (five years). Earliest spring arrival, May 11, 1918. Only fall date, September 1, 1916.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD. *Euphagus cyanocephalus*. A common summer resident, breeding. The Brewer's Blackbird, like the Rusty Blackbird, shows partiality to water, especially the prairie sloughs, during the fall migration. The nests of the Brewer's Blackbird which I have found were usually located in some briery tree, like the buffalo berry and wild plum. Average spring arrival, April 18 (nine years). Earliest spring arrival, April 12, 1925. Average fall departure, November 4 (eight years). Latest fall departure, December 6, 1923. The latest fall date varies from October 23, 1920, to December 6, 1923. I have heard others say that the bird sometimes remains throughout the winter.

BRONZED GRACKLE. *Quiscalus quiscula aeneus*. Rare. I saw it on June 2, 1920, and May 27, 1921. I do not know why the Bronzed Grackle is not found here; at Rice Lake, about sixty miles to the east, it is common, as it is also at Minot, about a hundred miles northeast.

ENGLISH SPARROW. *Passer domesticus*. A common resident throughout this area. It was common in 1912, and doubtless became so much earlier.

REDPOLL. *Acanthis linaria linaria*. A more or less regular winter visitor. Average fall arrival, November 17 (seven years). Earliest fall arrival, October 20, 1920. Latest fall arrival, January 6, 1914. Average spring departure, March 25 (eight years). Latest spring departure, April 21, 1917. Earliest spring departure, February 20, 1916.

HOARY REDPOLL. *Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*. Rare. A small flock was noted at a feeding tray on February 2, 1917, and for a few days thereafter. Among other Redpolls the considerable amount of white on the Hoary Redpoll distinguished it from the common one.

GOLDFINCH. *Astragalinus tristis tristis*. A common summer resident wherever there are bushes, trees, or bull thistles, and breeding. Average spring arrival, May 25 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, May 17, 1925. Average fall departure, September 30 (four years). Latest fall departure, October 6, 1920.

SNOW BUNTING. *Plectrophenax nivalis nivalis*. Usually a regular winter visitor, but in some years it is rarely seen. In years of heavy snowfall these birds are exceedingly abundant, assembling in flocks of thousands at times. Their clear "chip" note may be heard sometimes during a blizzard throughout the night. Average fall arrival, November 15 (six years). Earliest fall arrival, October 18, 1917. Latest fall arrival, November 25, 1913. Average spring departure,

March 9 (ten years). Latest spring departure, April 30, 1921. Earliest spring departure, February 11, 1917.

ALASKA LONGSPUR. *Calcarius lapponicus alascensis*. A common transient, while a few are found during the winter. Specimens submitted to the U. S. Biological Survey were referred to the subspecies here listed. Average fall arrival, October 13 (thirteen years). Average spring departure, April 4 (six years). Latest spring departure, April 11, 1921. I have other dates on their arrival in the spring from the south, but they are too few to be of much value.

CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR. *Calcarius ornatus*. A very common summer resident, nesting abundantly. It is one of our best songsters among the prairie sparrows, and prefers the natural prairies to the cultivated fields. Average spring arrival, April 10 (ten years). Earliest spring arrival, March 25, 1920. Average fall departure, September 24 (five years). Latest fall departure, October 14, 1912.

MCCOWN'S LONGSPUR. *Rhynchophanes mccowni*. A summer resident, breeding, though far less common than the Chestnut-collared. Average spring arrival, April 18 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, April 9, 1917. No fall migration records.

WESTERN VESPER SPARROW. *Pooecetes gramineus confinis*. With the possible exception of the Horned Lark this sparrow is the commonest bird to be found here during the summer, nesting abundantly. It is distributed quite evenly throughout the area, except in the heavily timbered parts. It is to be found commonly along the roads. The white outer tail feathers afford a conspicuous field mark, and their sweet song is in marked contrast to their dull plumage. Average spring arrival, April 24 (ten years). Earliest spring arrival, April 15, 1925. Latest spring arrival, April 30, 1918. Average fall departure, September 30 (six years). Latest fall departure, October 23, 1925.

WESTERN SAVANNAH SPARROW. *Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus*. A very common summer resident, breeding. Earliest spring arrival, May 4, 1924. Migration data meager.

BAIRD'S SPARROW. *Ammodramus bairdi*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, April 25 (two years). Latest fall departure, October 21, 1924.

WESTERN GRASSHOPPER SPARROW. *Ammodramus savannarum bimaculatus*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. It is often found on the grassy hillsides where there is a sparse growth of

silverberry and buck brush. Average spring arrival, May 17 (three years). Earliest spring arrival, May 11, 1921.

WESTERN HENSLOW'S SPARROW. *Passerherbulus henslowi occidentalis*. A tolerably common summer resident; it is usually to be found around marshes, and probably breeds. Date of spring arrival, May 20, 1924.

The Western Henslow's Sparrow, the Western Grasshopper Sparrow, Baird's Sparrow, and the Western Savannah Sparrow are all so much alike that it is difficult to secure accurate migration records which are more than guesswork. But it is safe to say that all four species are pretty well distributed throughout the area, the Henslow's being limited, of course, to the vicinity of the sloughs.

NELSON'S SPARROW. *Passerherbulus nelsoni nelsoni*. A very rare bird, I think. On May 25, 1924, I observed one feeding along a willow-grown margin of a bayou of the Missouri River. At the first notice of it I took it to be a Palm Warbler, but upon closer inspection it proved to be a Nelson's Sparrow.

WESTERN LARK SPARROW. *Chondestes grammacus strigatus*. This is another remarkable songster of the sparrow tribe, which frequents the badlands and the hot valleys. It will be found near sage brush. This sparrow is very common in some localities and entirely absent in others. Average spring arrival, May 18 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, May 6, 1920. Average fall departure, August 27 (five years). Latest fall departure, September 9, 1924.

HARRIS'S SPARROW. *Zonotrichia querula*. A tolerably common transient. Average spring arrival, May 9 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, May 5, 1913. Latest spring arrival, May 12, 1920. Average spring departure, May 19 (three years). Latest spring departure, May 27, 1917. Average fall arrival, September 25 (four years). Earliest fall arrival, September 16, 1923. Average fall departure, October 16 (four years). Latest fall departure, October 29, 1919.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW. *Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*. A tolerably common transient. Average spring arrival, May 6 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, May 2, 1913. Latest spring arrival, May 10, 1923. Average spring departure, May 15 (three years). Latest spring departure, May 17, 1913. Average fall arrival, September 23 (four years). Earliest fall arrival, September 16, 1916. Average fall departure, October 2 (four years). Latest fall departure, October 7, 1921.

GAMBEL'S SPARROW. *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*. A tolerably common transient, which is to be distinguished from *leucophrys* by the whitish lores. A specimen has been submitted to the U. S. Biological Survey. Average spring arrival, April 25 (two years). Earliest spring arrival, April 20, 1925. Average spring departure, May 7 (two years). Latest spring departure, May 10, 1920. During the fall of 1924 it was observed from September 14 to October 13.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW. *Zonotrichia albicollis*. A tolerably common transient, but less numerous than *querula*, *leucophrys* or *gambeli*. Average spring arrival, May 10 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, May 2, 1920. Average fall arrival, September 18 (three years). Earliest fall arrival, September 14, 1924. Latest fall departure recorded, October 13, 1924.

The young of *leucophrys*, *gambeli*, and *albicollis* in the fall present quite a problem in accurate field identification.

WESTERN TREE SPARROW. *Spizella monticola ochracea*. A very common transient, but it does not winter here. Average spring arrival, March 20 (eleven years). Earliest spring arrival, February 27, 1921. Average spring departure, April 24 (nine years). Latest spring departure, May 6, 1924. Average fall arrival, September 30 (Seven years). Earliest fall arrival, September 21, 1919. Average fall departure, October 17 (six years). Latest fall departure, November 16, 1919.

WESTERN CHIPPING SPARROW. *Spizella passerina arizonae*. A very common transient; I have found no evidence of its breeding in this area. Average spring arrival, May 12 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, May 4, 1924.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW. *Spizella pallida*. A very common summer resident, breeding; and frequenting the brushy prairie. Average spring arrival, May 10 (seven years). Earliest spring arrival, May 8, 1913. Latest spring arrival, May 16, 1917. Average fall departure, September 14 (eight years). Latest fall departure, October 4, 1924.

WESTERN FIELD SPARROW. *Spizella pusilla arenacea*. Rare. I have found it in only one locality, namely, on a hillside close to the badland breaks, and in a sparse growth of buck brush, wild gooseberry bushes, etc. Here there were two pairs, and the males were singing lustily on every occasion that I could visit the place.

SLATE-COLORED JUNCO. *Junco hyemalis hyemalis*. A very common transient. Average spring arrival, April 4 (nine years). Earliest spring arrival, March 21, 1918. Latest spring arrival, April 17, 1914.

Average spring departure, May 5 (six years). Latest spring departure, May 13, 1918. Earliest spring departure, April 24, 1921. Average fall arrival, September 27 (seven years). Earliest fall arrival, September 8, 1917. Latest fall arrival, October 30, 1919. Average fall departure, October 17 (six years). Latest fall departure, November 16, 1919. Earliest fall departure, September 25, 1912.

MONTANA JUNCO. *Junco hyemalis montanus*. It is sometimes seen in migrations, e. g., May 1, 1921.

DAKOTA SONG SPARROW. *Melospiza melodia juddi*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, April 14 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, March 28, 1918. Average fall departure, October 20 (five years). Latest fall departure, November 8, 1919.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW. *Melospiza lincolni lincolni*. A common transient. Average spring arrival, May 2 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, April 29, 1925. Average spring departure, May 21 (three years). Latest spring departure, May 30, 1924. The fall migration is from September 14 to 30 (1924).

ARCTIC TOWHEE. *Pipilo maculatus arcticus*. A very common summer resident, breeding; and is found almost wherever there is brush and timber. This bird can give a good many variations of its simple song. Average spring arrival, May 3 (ten years). Earliest spring arrival, April 24, 1913. Average fall departure, October 7 (four years). Latest fall departure, October 10, 1924.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK. *Hedymeles melanocephalus*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 26 (three years). No fall records.

LAZULI BUNTING. *Passerina amoena*. An uncommon summer resident, which shows a partiality for willows. Average spring arrival, June 4 (two years). Latest departure, August 8, 1920.

DICKICSEL. *Spiza americana*. A rare and irregular summer resident. It was common only in the year 1921.

LARK BUNTING. *Calamospiza melanocorys*. An abundant summer resident, breeding abundantly. A bird of the native prairie and companion of the Chestnut-collared Longspur, and a beautiful singer. Average spring arrival, May 19 (ten years). Earliest spring arrival, May 13, 1915. Average fall departure, August 22 (three years). Latest fall departure, August 30, 1920.

SCARLET TANAGER. *Piranga erythromelas*. Very rare. One was seen on May 24, 1921.

PURPLE MARTIN. *Progne subis subis*. Rare. A pair was seen in Charlson on May 27 and June 25, 1921.

CLIFF SWALLOW. *Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 22 (four years). Average fall departure, August 23 (two years).

BARN SWALLOW. *Hirundo erythrogaster*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 19 (nine years). Earliest spring arrival, May 9, 1919. Average fall departure, September 16 (seven years). Latest fall departure, September 25, 1925.

TREE SWALLOW. *Iridoprocne bicolor*. Rare. One was seen on August 24, 1925.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING. *Bombycilla garrula*. An irregular winter visitor, exceedingly abundant in some years. During the years of abundance they are always to be found about the juniper trees in the badlands; they are also very fond of the red haws and buffalo berries. Average fall arrival, November 22 (five years). Earliest fall arrival, November 10, 1919. Average spring departure, March 12 (eight years). Latest spring departure, April 10, 1921. Earliest spring departure, February 16, 1917.

CEDAR WAXWING. *Bombycilla cedrorum*. An uncommon summer resident, breeding. It usually nests in the cedars in the badlands. Earliest spring arrival, May 6, 1919.

NORTHERN SHRIKE. *Lanius borealis*. An irregular winter visitor. Average fall arrival, October 29 (nine years). Earliest fall arrival, October 16, 1919. Average spring departure, March 15 (four years). Latest spring departure, March 23, 1914.

WHITE-RUMPED SHRIKE. *Lanius ludovicianus excubitorides*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. It generally selects a tall, lone cottonwood for a nesting site. Average spring arrival, April 27 (five years). Earliest spring arrival, March 25, 1918. Average fall departure, October 3 (four years). Latest fall departure, October 27, 1912.

RED-EYED VIREO. *Vireosylva olivacea*. A common summer resident wherever there are trees, breeding. Average spring arrival, May

29 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, May 25, 1921. Latest fall departure, August 31, 1924.

WARBLING VIREO. *Vireosylva gilva*. A tolerably common summer resident, breeding. Having taken no specimens I do not know whether the subspecies is *gilva* or *swainsoni*. Average spring arrival, June 1 (two years).

BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER. *Mniotilta varia*. An uncommon but regular transient; a few may nest. Average spring arrival, May 13 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, May 6, 1921. August 29, 1920, is the only fall date.

TENNESSEE WARBLER. *Vermivora peregrina*. An uncommon transient. Average spring arrival, May 21 (two years). Latest spring departure, May 30, 1921.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER. *Vermivora celata celata*. A common transient; may be considered the commonest warbler migrant. Average spring arrival, May 7 (two years). Fall dates, September 14-28 (1924).

YELLOW WARBLER. *Dendroica aestiva aestiva*. A very common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 18 (eight years). Earliest spring arrival, May 13, 1917. Average fall departure, August 26 (four years). Latest fall departure, September 5, 1918.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER. *Dendroica magnolia*. An uncommon transient. Average spring arrival, May 27 (two years). Latest spring departure, May 30, 1924.

MYRTLE WARBLER. *Dendroica coronata*. A regular and common transient. Average spring arrival, May 1 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, April 21, 1921. Average spring departure, May 15 (six years). Latest spring departure, May 26, 1918. Average fall arrival, September 20 (four years). Earliest fall arrival, September 14, 1916. Average fall departure, October 8 (two years). Latest fall departure, October 11, 1913.

BLACK-POLL WARBLER. *Dendroica striata*. A common transient. Average spring arrival, May 18 (four years). Average spring departure, May 26 (four years). Latest spring departure, May 30, 1924.

OVEN-BIRD. *Seiurus aurocapillus*. A tolerably common summer resident of the brushy coulees, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 27 (two years).

GRINNELL'S WATER-THRUSH. *Seiurus noveboracensis notabilis*. A common transient, possibly breeding. Average spring arrival, May 14 (four years). Earliest spring arrival, May 9, 1921.

WESTERN YELLOW-THROAT. *Geothlypis trichas occidentalis*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 24 (five years). Average fall departure, September 17 (two years). Latest fall departure, September 30, 1924.

LONG-TAILED CHAT. *Icteria virens longicauda*. A common summer resident in the chaparral, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 26 (seven years). Earliest spring arrival, May 22, 1923. Average fall departure, September 3 (three years). Latest fall departure, September 15, 1924.

REDSTART. *Setophaga ruticilla*. A common transient and less common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 25 (two years).

PIPIT. *Anthus rubescens*. A common transient. Average spring arrival, April 26 (three years). Average spring departure, May 4 (two years). Earliest fall arrival, September 24, 1925. Average fall departure, October 16 (two years).

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT. *Anthus spraguei*. A rare summer resident. I found a dead specimen caught in some barbed wire. Latest fall departure, August 25, 1920.

CATBIRD. *Dumetella carolinensis*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 24 (six years). Earliest spring arrival, May 17, 1918. Average fall departure, September 12 (six years). Latest fall departure, September 18, 1912.

BROWN THRASHER. *Toxostoma rufum*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 12 (nine years). Earliest spring arrival, May 9, 1920. Average fall departure, September 14 (five years). Latest fall departure, September 19, 1917.

ROCK WREN. *Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletes*. A common summer resident in the badlands, breeding. Earliest spring arrival, May 10, 1920. Latest fall departure, September 19, 1917.

WESTERN HOUSE WREN. *Troglodytes aedon parkmani*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, May 22 (seven years). Earliest spring arrival, May 12, 1920. Average fall departure, September 6 (five years). Latest fall departure, September 15, 1916.

PRAIRIE MARSH WREN. *Telmatodytes palustris iliacus*. A common summer resident of the marshes, breeding. Latest date of fall departure, September 16, 1923.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH. *Sitta canadensis*. A not common transient, possibly breeding. Earliest spring arrival, May 4, 1919.

LONG-TAILED CHICKADEE. *Penthestes atricapillus septentrionalis*. A common resident, breeding.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET. *Regulus calendula calendula*. An uncommon transient, though sometimes common. Earliest spring arrival, April 23, 1920. Latest spring departure, May 22, 1924. Fall dates, September 28-29 (1920).

WILLOW THRUSH. *Hylocichla fuscescens salicicola*. An uncommon transient. May 18, 1924.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH. *Hylocichla aliciae aliciae*. An uncommon transient. May 18 to June 8 (1924).

OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH. *Hylocichla ustulata swainsoni*. A common transient. Average spring arrival, May 18 (two years). Average spring departure, June 1 (two years).

HERMIT THRUSH. *Hylocichla guttata pallasi*. A rare transient. One was seen on May 11, 1913.

ROBIN. *Planesticus migratorius migratorius*. A common summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, April 6 (nine years). Average fall departure, October 20 (eight years). Latest fall departure, November 2, 1917. Occasionally Robins are found throughout the winter among the junipers in the badlands; they are very fond of juniper berries, buffalo berries, and red haws. The Western Robin (*propinquus*) is sometimes seen, if the lack of white spots in the tail is a determining character.

BLUEBIRD. *Sialia sialis sialis*. An uncommon summer resident, breeding. Average spring arrival, March 24 (two years). Latest fall departure, October 27, 1924.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD. *Sialia currucoides*. A common resident in the badlands, breeding. Average spring arrival, March 26 (five years).

SIoux FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA.